

While the Soldier Waits Give Him Chance to Study

The American Library Association Has a Widespread Organization to Draft Books for Active Service

By Eloise Robinson

PARIS, Oct. 20 (By mail).—Books, books and still more books is the demand of the American fighting man, and his insatiable appetite for good reading matter is being satisfied by the seven united war work agencies. Our men when not engaged in military affairs are reading as many of them never read before, the best of thousands of libraries being placed at their disposal through the efforts of the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the National Catholic War Council and K. of C., the War Camp Community Service, the Jewish Welfare Board, the American Library Association and the Salvation Army. Trifling with Mr. Kipling's description, it is safe to say that our fighters will return from their victories as a "well-read line of heroes." I know, for I have seen.

When the American Library Association issued its call for books last March every one ransacked his library and sent out books. We heard funny stories of absurd contributions, such as an eighteenth century "Manual of Conduct for a Perfect Lady." Then most of us forgot our efforts. I did. Then one morning in Paris I found that our efforts had been worth while.

I had wandered into the "Library Bureau" of the Y. M. C. A., and there, in a little wooden case, with a shelf through the centre, among other books I saw a beautifully bound set of books on engineering. I suppose the man in charge thought I was crazy when I hugged those books, but I knew them well. For a long time they had stood in one particular corner of the "den" in our home back in Ohio. They had been the particular pets of my father, a lawyer with leanings toward mechanical information. He had parted with them when the call came for solid reading for our soldiers—and here they were marked for a station near the front!

Clearing the Books for Abroad

Then I learned that more than 3,000,000 volumes had been handed in at American libraries for distribution by the A. L. A. About half were used in cantonnments in the United States, while 1,500,000 have already found their way to France, where they have reached the soldiers through the Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., the K. of C., the Salvation Army and A. L. A. libraries. In America these organizations and the Jewish Welfare Board and War Camp Community Service assure the books reaching the men.

The work of clearing the available books contributed was handled efficiently. In libraries all over the United States there existed an expert system of caring for the books as they arrived, sorting those which would be of use for the men from those to be sold for what they would bring, cataloguing them and pasting into them the book plates and pockets which distinguish them as library books. There were not many books to be sold, for, in spite of the funny stories we heard, most of the books were of the sort the soldiers desired, recent novels, books of reference, history, autobiographies, plays, dictionaries and books of travel.

To transport these books the government allows cargo space for fifty tons a month, about 100,000 volumes. This was not enough. Sammy is a bookworm and needs 200,000. So Y. M. C. A. and Knights of Columbus secretaries, on board transports, bring over, in addition, as many packages as the captains will permit. Also, they bring the magazines on which you placed one-cent stamps. These are sorted and bundled in New York for distribution to front-line trenches, where there is no time for consecutive reading of books. Speaking of ships—250,000 volumes are placed on board our war ships for our sailors' reading.

The book cargoes, upon arriving in France, are placed in storehouses long

enough to be divided for distribution in plain sectional bookcases. Two cases packed with fiction and one with atlases; year books, dictionaries and similar reference works make the unit which goes to every camp as the basis of a library. More are added as rapidly as they can be obtained.

Pershing Writes a Bookplate

On each volume is a bookplate which General Pershing has signed, reading as follows: "These books come overseas from home. To read them is a privilege; to restore them promptly, unabused, a duty." Inside the cover of each volume is the regulation library pocket for a card for the name of the man who borrows it, and the usual fly-leaf record. There is the usual rule that books may not be kept out longer than four or five days, but the army readers usually return the volumes in three days. In a collection of 3,000 volumes, which were turned over every three days, only ten or twelve books were lost in a period of several months. Signs on the library walls explain the difficulty of getting books to France and ask the soldiers to "play square with the other fellow." And the soldier has played square.

Of course, the debarkation ports were first to be outfitted with libraries, but by September more than 200 points had them. At general headquarters there were forty-three cases—more than 3,000 volumes—when I investigated. But the men were insatiable; they howled for more. They never before had had so much time for reading—it was light until 10 o'clock on summer evenings. Consequently it was almost impossible to keep the books on the shelves. So the men at G. H. Q. called for 3,000 more books because the first 3,000 always were in use.

Recently the Paris office of the "Y" sent down a photographer to take a picture of a soldier reading a book to show the folks back home that their contributions were appreciated. The Paris secretary responsible for this move was delighted to see, when the print was made, a photograph of a soldier reading "Robinson Crusoe." He had selected several copies of that desert island story for this library and gloated over the visible proof of his good judgment. Then the photographer brought him down out of control by explaining that the soldier who posed took the only book left in the library, excepting four other copies of "Robinson Crusoe." Why poor Robinson was neglected no one could explain, unless it was that every boy had read it in early youth.

Light Reading for the Hospital

The books sent to hospitals are strictly light, literally and literally. The wounded man wants nothing that will rest heavily on either his hands or his brain. Scrap-books when well-made and that will lie flat when open are popular. Anything to read is especially appreciated in the contagious wards where no entertainers or visitors are allowed. The man demanding and receiving the biggest number of books in one hospital recently was just recovering from spinal meningitis. Although the books are burned as soon as he has finished them he never lacks a supply, for he lives in a glass case with none near but his nurse.

The library force celebrated the Fourth of July in a typical act of service. It placed on every American ambulance train in France a case of books, to be used not only for the men whose wounds were slight enough to permit their enjoying reading, but for the train crew and nurses who spend their time travelling back and forth and often have tiresome half-hours to while away.

One secretary at a small port town, where American destroyers put in and out constantly, obtained ten cases of the most popular books and distributed them to the warships. When the crew of one destroyer finishes reading a case it

swaps cases with the next destroyer which it meets. Now some of these improvised outfits are going down to the American fighters in Italy.

American soldiers in German prison camps are reached by these travelling libraries. Probably because it helps to keep the men quiet and they are thus more easily taken care of, Germany has permitted books to be sent in through Switzerland—books written before August, 1914, and which contain no aspersions on the Fatherland. The aim of the library bureau is to ship one book a month to every prisoner in Germany. At first only 250 were needed, but this number has increased.

Improving the Shining Hours

Contrary to the prevailing belief, the prisoners do not prefer fiction. Each prison camp is organized into groups and has selected a central committee through which all requests for books are sent. These prisoners asked first of all for English-German, German-English dictionaries, then French-English dictionaries, geographies, histories, books of general reference and books for the study of special subjects. For these men are trying to occupy their

minds with something which not only will help them endure their present conditions, but which will make them better men and citizens when the war is won.

In fact, everywhere the books go the men are asking for books of instruction rather than for fiction. In the average library at home the call for fiction is about 60 per cent of the total. In the army it is just the reverse, 40 per cent. The men want books on finance, law, and all kinds of engineering. Every motor mechanic in an aviation camp is trying to become an aviator; he wants a stripe on his sleeve, if not chevrons. So he uses his evenings and other spare time to study books on gas engines and electric engines and modern engineering.

Yet how they love poetry! Especially that of Robert Service and Kipling. Anthologies are almost never on the shelves, which proves that Miss Lowell and Mr. Masters and their disciples and all the other poets have followers who have spread their influence farther than perhaps they knew. Shakespeare always is demanded, and one man—he must have been Irish, his name was Sullivan—sent in from the front to Paris for a copy of the poems of John Donne, a seventeenth century divine of whom most of us never heard.

New quarters have been chosen for the library bureau and the educational department—a beautiful, convenient building on the Champs Elysées, in Paris, where it will be possible not only for these two departments to coordinate their work more closely, but for the

library to be more efficient in supplying the book needs of the American Expeditionary Force. The intention is to have here a reserve supply of all books that any American could possibly want, where they can be sent out at a moment's notice.

Sammy may read the latest books as soon as the folks at home. By special arrangement the publishers sending out books for review are inserting in each book a slip asking the reviewer to turn the volumes over to the nearest library for overseas service as soon as reviewed.

Yank as Reader

THE American soldier wants good books. He does not necessarily want goody goody books, but he wants entertaining books; books that fill in the idle hour. Books that cheer. And so this organization came into the Big Seven because it had its work cut out and was a part of the whole. Hundreds of books have gone to the camps and still the cry is for more. The time is coming when books will be in greater demand than ever before. This institution deserves its share of the fund to be raised to care for our boys abroad.



A travelling circulating library near the firing line.

Old Prejudices Forgotten by All Who Take Part in War

By Herbert S. Nathan

THE war has taught us many lessons that we needed very much to learn; it has made impossible things not merely possible but essential. And there is hardly a man or woman in America who has not in some degree been lifted by it out of his old prejudices onto a higher, broader plane of thought.

This fall, in the week of November 11-18, we shall see the truth of that statement splendidly demonstrated. In that week the seven agencies engaged in war work for our soldiers and sailors are to unite in a great campaign for funds with which to continue their ministry.

Of the seven agencies, two are Protestant, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. one; the National Catholic War Council, embracing the Knights of Columbus, is Catholic; the Jews are represented by the Jewish Welfare Board, and the other three, the American Library Association, the War Camp Community Service and the Salvation Army, have no denominational affiliation. For a year they have served the army and navy as no troops were ever served before; they have regarded themselves as co-laborers, yet there has been inevitably in their service some spirit of rivalry.

"They cannot be brought together," men have said. "You cannot unite Catholics, Protestants and Jews."

Yet on September 5 President Wilson issued a simple letter suggesting that in their campaign this fall they appeal to the country together instead of individually. And on the very evening of that day a meeting was held in New York consisting of five representatives of each organization. On motion of a representative of the Catholics, John R. Mott, a Protestant, was nominated director general of the campaign; the motion was seconded by Mortimer L. Schiff, representing the Jews, and unanimously carried. And in that spirit of unanimity the seven organizations that "could not be united" are proceeding shoulder to shoulder, with solid front.

The impossible was achieved in a single day; what years of discussion and conven-

tion had failed to bring about, the larger spirit which the war has engendered achieved without an effort.

That such a spirit of concord, devoted to such a cause, should disappear with the conclusion of the campaign is impossible. Men and women who have thrown their souls into a great common effort do not easily lose touch with each other. There grows up in them a mutual regard and attachment that is far stronger than the differences of creed and race. The campaign of November will be a magnificent thing for the boys over there, but its influence on the men and women over here will extend far beyond the campaign itself, to solidify and fortify the nation in all the years to come.

The sum sought by the seven agencies is immense—\$170,000,000—the largest single gift ever asked of any people at one time. Yet compared with the figures to which the war has accustomed us it is small. Measured against the huge total which we shall pay to keep our boys under arms next year, this sum which is to provide for their comfort and cheer becomes almost insignificant. It is less than 10 cents a day for each boy—less than the average man spends for cigars.

It will be raised—not grudgingly, but in a spirit of splendid enthusiasm. The country will go over the top for the Big Seven as it has gone over the top for the Liberty Loan and the Red Cross.

And in the fervor of its sacrifice it will have won for itself a great and lasting reward. The gift which goes out to bless the boys in France and in our camps and on our great ships everywhere will return to bless the givers a hundredfold.

They will have learned in their giving a finer patriotism, a larger tolerance and a wider appreciation of the good that lies in every creed and faith. The United War Work Campaign will leave us more than ever before a united people, more fitted to carry forward America's great destiny, better qualified for leadership in a reconstructed and reunited world.

The Army Theatre Finds Its Way to France

IN addition to entertainments, popular talks by popular speakers have been given to thousands of men by the Y. M. C. A. The number of these talks, as compiled by the entertainment department, was 395 for the month. The speakers included twenty Americans wearing the uniform of the Y. M. C. A., two Red Cross volunteers, five Frenchmen of reputation and one Belgian, a total of twenty-eight.

There is also now in full working order a department for the development of army talent. Under the direction of Joseph Linden Smith, this branch has twenty-five directors in the field, working among the soldiers who have ambitions to become John Drews, George Cohns and Lew Dockstaders. Practically all of the army units which have been in France long enough to appreciate the fact have minstrel and theatrical companies of their own. For these the Y. M. C. A. provides all necessary costumes and some of the scenery. The department of entertainment material looks out for all "props," from dress suits for minstrels, magicians and the like to mandolin picks and sheet music for musicians.

For the six weeks ended August 1 this department had loaned to units 1,684 costumes of all kinds, 257 musical instruments, 110 wigs, 702 plays, and had given out 191 special orchestrations, 1,279 songs and 1,311 make-up sets. These figures may not mean a great deal, but they will show what kind of work the department is doing.

There are now on the payroll six women who do nothing except alter costumes and make new ones. They are at present preparing 2,600 minstrel and Santa Claus costumes for use in the huts throughout France at Christmas time. And then there are the motion pictures. These are just as popular with the soldiers as they are with the folks at home. No "movie" show in soldierland ever lacks patrons. It has been said before, but it is worth saying again, that the three things which many men in khaki like best in the way of diversion are "motion pictures, more motion pictures, and then more motion pictures."

The motion picture bureau of the A.

What Soldiers Want To Read

UNDERSTABLE proof that going to war involves knowledge slightly wider than the technique of pulling a trigger is furnished in a request for books from Librarian Josselyn of the American Library Association library at Camp Johnston, Florida. In one day alone he forwarded requests from soldiers there for books covering:

Coffee—roasting, blending, rather than cultivation.
Woolens.
Refrigeration.
Cold storage and transportation of food materials.
Medical dictionary.
Sanitation and the public health.
Psychology.
Shorthand and typewriting; also mechanics of the typewriter.
"And anything else in addition that you may have handy."
Here are specimen questions asked at the American Library Association's library at Camp Bueauregard in one day:
"Who is the Sultan of Turkey?"
"What is the population of Philadelphia?"
"How many months in the year is the Baltic navigable?"
"Is there such a place as hell? And is there a princess of hell?"
"Is Alan Seeger American or English?"
"How much space in a line of march is required by a motorcycle?"
"What people of ancient times were destroyed because they had six senses instead of five?"
"Where was Atlantis, the island described by Plato, where people were perfectly happy and contented?"



Sometimes the library has other attractions than mere books and magazines.

Raise Twenty-five Million Dollars? "Easy," Says Douglas Fairbanks

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, the athletic "movie" star, has consented to attempt the seeming impossible. He is going to raise \$25,000,000 of the \$170,500,000 needed by the seven great morale organizations to carry on the work laid out by them in caring for our soldiers abroad.

Last Saturday afternoon the nimble "Doug," waving in his hand his newly received appointment as Special Publicity Representative for National Activities, bestowed upon him by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Dr. John R. Mott, Commander Evangeline Booth of the Salvation Army and Mortimer Schiff, of the Jewish Welfare Board, climbed to the top of a giant painted doughnut, erected on the roof of the twenty-story headquarters of the United War Work Campaign, and there pledged himself to raise, in a dash across the United States, this big sum of money.

"I will put them up against the wall and take it away from them with bullets of persuasion and with facts they cannot dodge," said Fairbanks. "I will do my bit in a straight line from coast to coast, and since there are seven organizations involved I will raise one-seventh of the money."

New York City has witnessed windy days, but scarcely any more windy than last Saturday. In spite of the wind "Doug" did "stunts" that fairly took the breath of the crowd that watched him. The "movie" star was greeted by a committee of War Work leaders, headed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., chairman of the New York City committee; by Dr. John R. Mott, director general of the National Campaign; by George W. Perkins, of the Y. M. C. A.; Evangeline Booth, commander of the Salvation Army, and Mortimer Schiff, of the Jewish Welfare Board.

On receiving his special commission Fairbanks, attired in white overalls and white cap, climbed to the top of a huge signboard and painted thereon this slogan: "One hundred seventy million five hundred thousand dollars or Bust. Come on, Americans." He did this while hanging head down and finished by doing other startling feats.

"It's the startling stuff in these strenuous times that will get them," shouted Fairbanks to the crowd. "I will never quit until I have gathered twenty-five million round dollars for this cause."

"Doug" then slid out of his overalls and mounted to the top of a huge "dummy"

doughnut, which had been erected on the roof of the skyscraper, carrying up with him Miss Isabel Smith, a Salvation Army War Worker, and held her poised at the dizzy height while cameras clicked and the crowd below cheered to the echo.

Within the centre of the doughnut were gathered women war workers from the Y. W. C. A., women's division of the Y. M. C. A. and Salvation Army, all in overseas uniform and each holding an armful of the famous doughnuts and pies which have helped American soldiers smash the Hun.

Miss Lucille Knight, Red Cross nurse, then wheeled up to the base of the doughnut a wounded soldier, Private Gaylord M. Cormany, a North Dakota boy, from the 164th Infantry, who had been gassed in Lunéville. Fairbanks, seeing the soldier, slid in a flash down from his perch and received from this wounded hero the first

dollar to be contributed in his nation-wide drive.

At this moment skies which had been overcast cleared, and as the sun shone forth a great rainbow appeared. At this sign the crowd set up a renewed yell and Fairbanks cried: "That settles it. Good luck is with the drive. I will get twenty-five millions for the men in France and nothing can stop me."

Mr. Rockefeller then stepped over to Fairbanks and said: "I hope you will have better luck than you did when you tried to land me for that last million on the Liberty Loan after we had all gone the limit."

"Well, if I overlooked anything I'll be back," was Fairbanks's rejoinder, and the crowd shouted with delight.

After wishing Dr. Mott, Commander Booth and Mr. Schiff the best of luck in the campaign, Fairbanks hurried away to start on the coast-to-coast tour in support of the forthcoming drive, beginning November 11.

While all this was taking place every window in the Biltmore Hotel was a paragon seat for the matinee in which Fairbanks was the star. His itinerary begins in Washington, then takes him to Charlotte, N. C., Spartanburg, S. C., Greenville, S. C., Atlanta, New Orleans, San Antonio, Tex., El Paso, Tucson, Ariz., and Los Angeles, Cal.

The Y. W. C. A. War Work Council has put its resources at the service of the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities.

The Y. W. C. A. War Work Council maintains ninety-one hostess houses in army, navy and aviation camps, thirteen of them for colored troops.

The Y. W. C. A. War Work Council makes a "bit of home within the camp" off hours for the men, visiting days for mother, friends and babies.

Special aid to the foreign born in their home tongues provided by the Y. W. C. A. War Work Council helps cheerful service beneath the flag.

Ninety-three girls' club and recreation centres provided by the Y. W. C. A. War Work Council make men in uniform wel-



Sorting a few of the books to go to camps at home and abroad.